



Directorate of
Intelligence

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Afghanistan Situation Report

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4 January 1983

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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CHRISTMAS IN KABUL 2

Insurgent activity in and around Kabul during the end of December indicates that while the regime's control in the capital is still strong, the surrounding area remains a no man's land. [REDACTED]

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LATEST ROUND OF SOVIET COMMENT ON AFGHANISTAN 2

The Soviets continue to tailor their Afghan comment to meet varying objectives in different places. [REDACTED]

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This document is prepared weekly by the Office of Near East/South Asia and the Office of Soviet Analysis. Questions or comments on the issues raised in the publication should be directed to [REDACTED]

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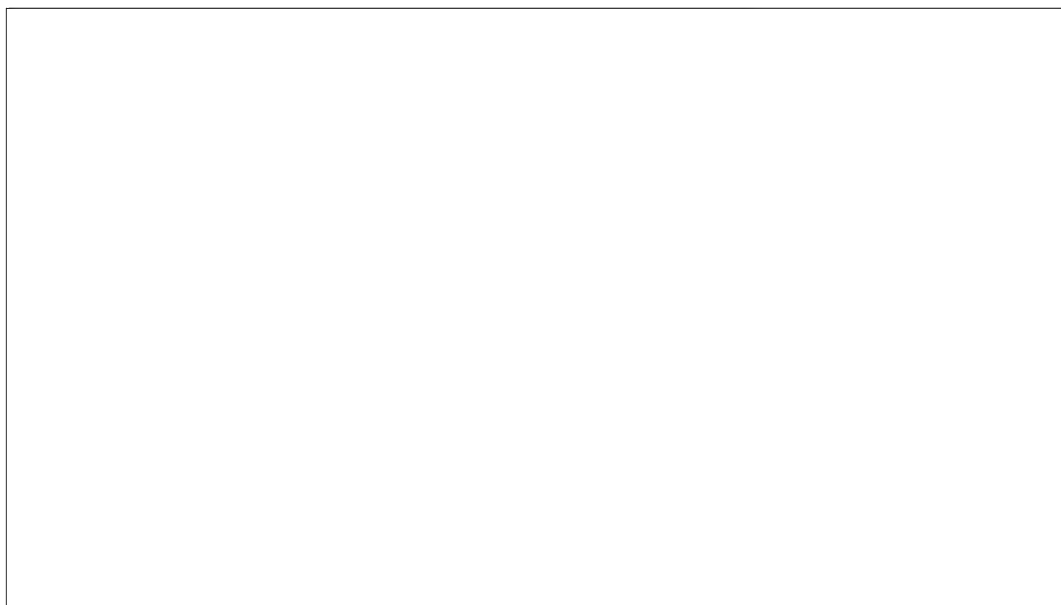
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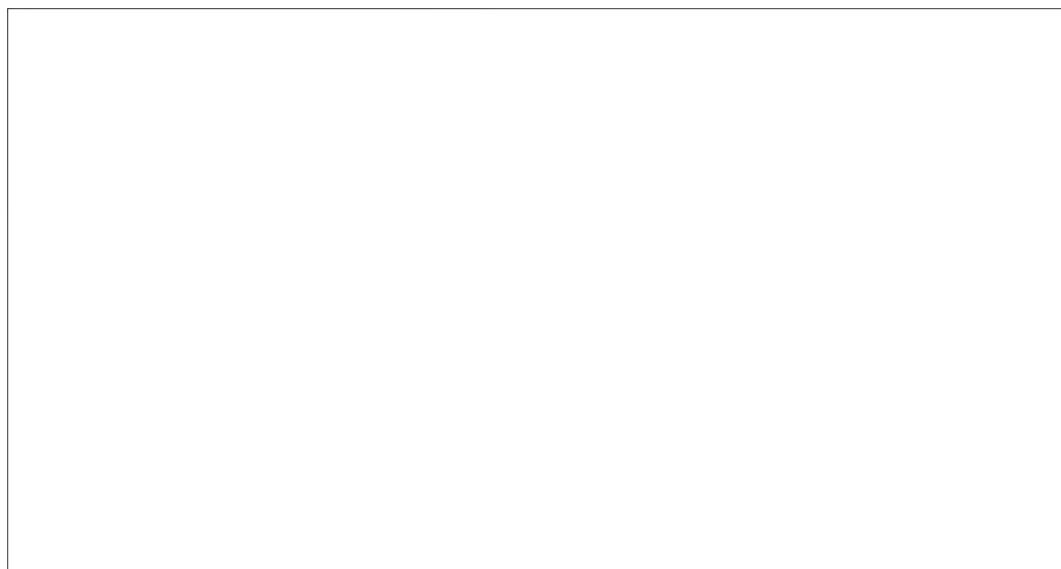
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CHRISTMAS IN KABUL

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During the anniversary week of the Soviet invasion, the insurgents did not launch any spectacular operations, but sporadic gunfire could be heard through many of the nights. The insurgents did interrupt totally the capital's supply of electricity for the first time by blowing up five power transmission pylons outside the city. The regime, for its part, organized an anti-US demonstration of 18,000 to 20,000 people, which--although unenthusiastic--was the largest to date.

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Comment: The Afghan government's ability to limit resistance activity to sporadic fighting during the anniversary of the Soviet invasion suggests that its security network in Kabul is relatively effective. Similarly, its ability to organize a large, if sullen, number of demonstrators underscores its control of the Kabul populace. The insurgents' capability to cause the power blackout, however, demonstrates that government control remains weak just a few miles outside the capital.

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LATEST ROUND OF SOVIET COMMENT ON AFGHANISTAN

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A TASS statement on Afghanistan issued on December 31 authoritatively reiterates Moscow's interest in a political settlement and denies Soviet use of chemical warfare. It calls Administration statements about Soviet intentions in Asia and the Middle East "dirty political speculation" and says Western efforts to hold relations with the USSR hostage to developments in Afghanistan evoke only "surprise and censure".

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Earlier this month, a visiting scholar from the USA Institute told a group of US academics that General Secretary Andropov wanted to extricate the USSR from Afghanistan. He alleged the Soviets were encouraging India to reach a rapprochement with Pakistan so as to reduce Islamabad's concern about India and its need for US security.

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Twice immediately prior to the issuance of the TASS statement, Soviet officials with prior access to Andropov in Moscow also

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told US officials privately that he is looking for a way out of the USSR's Afghan problem. One even hinted Babrak might be expendable. [REDACTED]

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Comment: The Soviets hope that the appearance of greater flexibility on problems like Afghanistan and Kampuchea will facilitate resumption of bilateral dialogues with the West and China. At the same time, they recognize the danger that too much speculation could undermine an already fragile regime in Kabul. The TASS statement is the fourth public gesture of Soviet support for Kabul since Brezhnev's death. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets are not encouraging India and Pakistan to improve relations. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Ariana, the Afghan airlines, will soon begin passenger flights to Prague and East Berlin via Moscow. These stops will replace the lucrative landing rights lost in western Europe, but Austria, or other small countries, may still eventually grant such rights. [REDACTED]

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--UN Special Representative Cordovez plans to arrive in Tehran on 21 January, be in Islamabad 23-25 January, go to Kabul 26 January, and then return to Islamabad 30-31 January. [REDACTED]

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